

REMARKS

The Office Action mailed July 15, 2004 has been reviewed and carefully considered. The Examiner's allowance of claims 8 and 9, and indication of allowable subject matter for claims 2-4, 6 and 7, is appreciated. Claim 2 has been redrafted into independent form. Claims 10-12 have been added. Claims 1-12 are pending, the independent claims being 1, 2, 5 and 8. Reconsideration of the above-identified application, as herein amended and in view of the following remarks, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1 and 5 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,211,980 to Terahara.

Claim 1 has been amended merely as to form in accordance with MPEP 2164.08(a).

With respect to both claims, 1 and 5, the applicant respectfully submits that Terahara does not disclose interleaving. The Terahara WDM wavelength signals λ_i are distinguished from each other in FIG. 2, for illustration purposes, by the index i , where i indicates in which terminal port the signal of one or more wavelength frequencies (col. 6, lines 30-33) is input (col. 6, lines 40-42). Optical signals conveyed simultaneously on an optical fiber must occupy different wavelength channels, but this does not imply that two sets of such signals introduced onto the fiber interleave. For

example, with respect to claim 5, the first and second transceivers are apparently being deemed as corresponding to two of the Terahara terminals 50a, 50b, 60. Looking, however, at the signals received from both terminals, it is unclear how these received signals can fairly be regarded as being interleaved. For at least the foregoing reasons, neither claim 1 nor 5 is believed to be anticipated by Terahara.

Claims 10-12 have been added to emphasize aspects of what the applicants regard to be the invention, and find support in FIG. 5A and accompanying text in the specification.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is believed that this application is now in condition for allowance. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned in the event of any perceived outstanding issues so that passage of the case to issue can be effected without the need for a further Office Action.

Amendment
Serial No. 09/957,046

Docket No. 5000-1-211

In the event that any additional fee is required to continue the prosecution
of this Application as requested, please charge such fee to Deposit Account No. 502-470.

Respectfully submitted,

CHA & REITER

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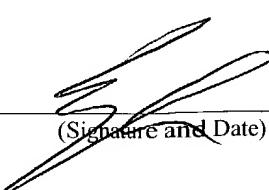
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